How to Grow Chervil

General
A delicate, parsley-like plant with a hint of licorice, chervil is one of the traditional fines herbs.

Latin
Anthriscus cerefolium
Family: Apiaceae

Difficulty
Easy

Season & Zone
Season: Cool season
Exposure: Sun or part-shade
Zone: 2-10

Timing
Start seeds indoors or direct sow in spring. Direct sow in summer and protect plants from midday sun for a winter crop - chervil is quite hardy. Keep transplanting to a minimum, as chervil develops a delicate taproot.

Starting
Sow seeds 5mm-1cm (¼-½") deep, and space plants 23-30cm (9-12") apart.

Growing
Plants will be ready for cutting 6-8 weeks after sowing. It's probably best to grow chervil in relatively damp soil in partial shade, as plants will bolt in hot mid-summer weather. Transplanting may also trigger bolting. Cover with a cloche in winter, and it will just keep growing until it blooms the following spring.

Harvest
Begin harvesting as needed 6-8 weeks after sowing, or when plants are 10cm (4") tall. Drying kills nearly all the flavour of the leaves, so freezing is best for long term storage.

Companion Planting
Chervil is an excellent companion for Brassicas, lettuce, and radishes, but does best in part shade. Try growing some between rows of tall cabbages and kale. Chervil helps to repel slugs.